

Scriptures June 26, 2022

Epistle Reading:

Galatians 5:13-18, 22-26

The Message

5:13-15

It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don't use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows. For everything we know about God's Word is summed up in a single sentence: Love others as you love yourself.

That's an act of true freedom. If you bite and ravage each other, watch out—in no time at all you will be annihilating each other, and where will your precious freedom be then?

16-18 My counsel is this: Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit..

22-23 But what happens when we live God's way? God brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely.

25-26 Since this is the kind of life we have chosen, the life of the Spirit, let us make sure that we do not just hold it as an idea in our heads or a sentiment in our hearts, but work out its implications in every detail of our lives. That means we will not compare ourselves with each other as if one of us were better and another worse. We have far more interesting things to do with our lives. Each of us is an original.

Gospel Reading:

Luke 9:51-62 The Message

51-54 When it came close to the time for his Ascension, he gathered up his courage and steeled himself for the journey to Jerusalem. He sent messengers on ahead. They came to a Samaritan village to make arrangements for his hospitality. But when the Samaritans learned that his destination was Jerusalem, they refused hospitality. When the disciples James and John learned of it, they said, "Master, do you want us to call a bolt of lightning down out of the sky and incinerate them?"

55-56 Jesus turned on them: "Of course not!" And they traveled on to another village.

57 On the road someone asked if he could go along. "I'll go with you, wherever," he said.

58 Jesus was curt: "Are you ready to rough it? We're not staying in the best inns, you know."

Jesus said to another, "Follow me."

59 He said, "Certainly, but first excuse me for a couple of days, please. I have to make arrangements for my father's funeral."

60 Jesus refused. "First things first. Your business is life, not death. And life is urgent: Announce God's kingdom!"

61 Then another said, "I'm ready to follow you, Master, but first excuse me while I get things straightened out at home."

62 Jesus said, "No procrastination. No backward looks. You can't put God's kingdom off till tomorrow. Seize the day."